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# Information Alert 2004-2

November 24, 2003

**TO: FEDLINK Customers**

**FROM: Susan M. Tarr, Executive Director, FLICC**

**SUBJECT: Direct Express Option(s) in Fiscal Year 2004**

After a successful year-long pilot of FEDLINK's Direct Express option, FEDLINK has expanded the program to more than 90 percent of its online services vendors. Similar to making a purchase using the GSA schedule, FEDLINK customers can place orders directly with online services vendors via the Direct Express option. Under this streamlined purchasing process, products and service offerings will be as comprehensive as always—electronic database publications, document delivery services, associated print publications and specialized access options.

## **Revolving Fund Establishes Authority for Direct Express**

Under Section 103 of P.L. 106-481 (2 U.S.C. 182c), which established FEDLINK as a revolving fund beginning in Fiscal Year 2002, FEDLINK can provide “the procurement of commercial information services, publications in any format, and library support services,...related accounting services,...related education, information and support services” to federal offices and to other organizations entitled to use federal sources of supply. In addition to interagency transfers for Transfer Pay services, FEDLINK can now accept fees from federal agencies that have “passed through” a vendor and have been earned for facilitating federal purchasing, i.e., the vendors pay the FEDLINK administrative fees.

To establish this option, FEDLINK negotiated indefinite delivery indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts on a sole source basis with online services vendors. An IDIQ allows the government to place orders for an indefinite quantity of commercially available supplies or services during a fixed period.

## **Place the Order Directly With the Vendor**

With Direct Express, customers simply cite the FEDLINK contract number on their agency's purchase order and send it straight to the vendor. No synopsis nor further competition is required on purchases over \$25,000 as the FEDLINK IDIQ establishes the vendors as sole source for their individual products and services. When comparing two vendors with similar databases, customers may want to compare prices or choose a vendor based upon their interface.

The vendor receives the purchase order, sets up the customer's account and promptly issues passwords and/or authorization numbers. The vendor will then invoice the FEDLINK customer directly against their agency's purchase order. The customer's agency finance office pays the invoice (and any interest penalties) and reports disbursements to the customer. FEDLINK does not issue statements of account for Direct Express purchases.

The vendor pays the FEDLINK fee based on the volume of quarterly sales of Direct Express customers. Direct Express customers are responsible for initiating the purchase, managing delivery of the products and services, and paying invoices.

## Online Services Vendors Now Participate in Direct Express

More than 40 online services vendors have contracts with FEDLINK to accept Direct Express orders. (See the chart below.) Last summer, FEDLINK staff issued a new request for proposals from these vendors and added the Direct Express option to their contracts. These same vendors are also available under Transfer Pay mode but are no longer available through the FEDLINK Direct Pay option.

### **Vendors Participating in the Direct Express Option In Addition to Transfer Pay**

	<b>Contract #</b>
BrightPlanet, Corp.	LOC04C-7040
Cambridge Scientific	LOC04C-7010
ChoicePoint, Inc.	LOC04C-7058
Columbia University Press	LOC04C-7046
Congressional Quarterly	LOC04C-7011
CQ Press	LOC04C-7013
CRIBIS Corporation	LOC04C-7049
Dialog Corporation (DATAStar-NewsEdge-Profound)	LOC04C-7019
Dun & Bradstreet	LOC04C-7018
East View Information.	LOC04C-7030
EBSCO Publishing	03CSFC70101
Economist Intelligence Unit, N. A.	LOC04C-7023
Economy.com, Inc.	LOC04C-7002
Fastcase.com, Inc.	LOC04C-7014
Gale Group	03CSFC70102
Global Insight	LOC04C-7008
H. W. Wilson	LOC04C-7035
I.S.I.	LOC04C-7041
InfoUSA	LOC04C-7005
Inside Washington Publishers	LOC04C-7003
Investigation Technologies (formerly Rapsheets.com)	LOC04C-7020
Jane's Information Group	LOC04C-7037
JSTOR	LOC04C-7043
Knovel Corporation	LOC03C-7031
LexisNexis / LexisNexis CourtLink	03CSFC70103
LRP Publications	LOC04C-7060
Market Research.com	LOC04C-7015
MD Consult (Elsevier)	LOC04C-7050
Moreover Technologies	LOC03C-7051
netLibrary, Inc.	LOC04C-7048
NewsBank, Inc.	LOC04C-7009
OECD	LOC04C-7006
Ovid Technologies, Inc.	LOC04C-7038
Peterson's Guides	LOC04C-7044

Press Association	LOC04C-7012
ProQuest Information and Learning Co.	03CSFC70104
Questel/Orbit	LOC04C-7059
Research Libraries Group	LOC04C-7053
RIA (Research Institute of America)	LOC04C-7042
Serials Solutions	LOC04C-7032
Standard & Poor's	LOC04C-7034
Tax Analysts	LOC04C-7056
TD Net	LOC04C-7054
TLC (The Library Corp.)	LOC04C-7025
UnCover Co. DBA Ingenta	LOC04C-7036
United Communications Group (Periscope)	LOC04C-7001
West Publishing Corp.	03CSFC70105
World Bank	LOC04C-7055

### **Transfer Pay Option Offers Customers More Account Options**

As cost effective as Direct Express is, most current members will continue to prefer transfer pay mode, which offers them more flexibility in managing their funds and provides more assistance with procurement processes.

Under the Transfer Pay option, customers transfer both FEDLINK administrative fees and estimated annual service dollars to FEDLINK/Library of Congress (LC) via a signed Interagency Agreement (IAG), purchase order, or MIPR. On behalf of the customer, LC/Contracts issues a delivery order to the vendor in the amount specified on the IAG. After receiving the delivery order, the vendor provides service to the customer and submits the customer's invoices to FEDLINK. FEDLINK reviews the invoices, rejects improper ones, and pays acceptable ones from the customer's account. FEDLINK sends the customer copies of rejected invoices, paid invoices, and a monthly statement of account.

If there are surplus funds in one vendor account, an amendment form can conveniently move these funds to another needed service.

Another major benefit of Transfer Pay is extended order deadlines. Instead of having to fulfill a member's order either by providing services or by issuing delivery orders to vendors prior to the end of the fiscal year, before their funds expire, FEDLINK is able to accept signed IAGs with firm orders late in September every year and generate delivery orders well into October. In addition, FEDLINK is also authorized to accept IAGs and amendments by fax, pending receipt of originals via courier service or mail. This reduces the lead time necessary to add funds to purchase information products and services at the end of the fiscal year.

### **More Information Is Available**

For questions on Direct Express, contact FEDLINK Network Operations by phone at (202) 707-4848 or by email to [FLICCfno@loc.gov](mailto:FLICCfno@loc.gov). For assistance with your current accounts, please call the FEDLINK Fiscal Hotline at (202) 707-4900.